PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference	FOR FURTHER ACTION	See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)
A3232.WO202		

International application No.	International filing date *(day/month/year)*	Priority date *(day/month/year)*
PCT/IB 03/04397	06.10.2003	08.10.2002

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC

B65B3/04

Applicant

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1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.

   ☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

   These annexes consist of a total of 2 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

   - I ☒ Basis of the opinion
   - II ☐ Priority
   - III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
   - IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
   - V ☒ Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
   - VI ☐ Certain documents cited
   - VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
   - VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand	Date of completion of this report
29.04.2004	18.11.2004

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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/IB 03/04397

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application *(Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17))*:

Description, Pages

1-12 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-6 received on 24.09.2004 with letter of 23.09.2004

Drawings, Sheets

1/5-5/5 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

   These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

   ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).

   ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).

   ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

   ☐ contained in the international application in written form.

   ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.

   ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.

   ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.

   ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.

   ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

   ☐ the description, pages:

   ☐ the claims, Nos.:

   ☐ the drawings, sheets:

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

   (Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes:	Claims	1-6
	No:	Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes:	Claims	1-6
	No:	Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes:	Claims	1-6
	No:	Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

   see separate sheet

Re Item V

Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

Reference is made to the following documents:

D1: US-A-2 638 259 (GARRETT ROBERT W) 12 May 1953

The document D1 is regarded as being the closest prior art to the subject-matter of claim 1, and shows (the references in parentheses applying to this document):

a machine for dispensing fluid substances into containers, comprising a tank (17), feed means (29) for supplying fluid substances to the tank (17), and a plurality of filler valves (21) positioned beneath the tank (17) such as can be associated singly with the containers, the tank (17) comprising a plurality of different compartments (25a,25b,25c,25d) isolated one from another and connecting each with at least one of the filler valves (21) and being rotatable about a respective axis (16) of rotation, the feed means (29) comprising a valve assembly (16,29) by which fluid substances are directed selectively to the different compartments of the tank (17)

The subject-matter of claim 1 differs from this known machine in that the valve assembly comprises a fixed portion presenting a plurality of inlet ports admitting fluid substances received from respective sources, and a moving portion, rotatable as one with the tank about the relative axis, presenting a plurality of outlet ports from which the fluid substances are directed to the respective compartments of the tank.

The subject-matter of claim 1 is therefore new (Article 33(2) PCT).

The problem to be solved by the present invention may be regarded as how to reduce the cleaning time and the complexity of the machine.

The solution to this problem proposed in claim 1 of the present application is considered as involving an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT) for the following reasons:

the machine of claim 1 is easier to clean as it uses a rotary valve instead of a complex rotating drum with upper and lower chamber which functions as a big valve.

Claims 2-6 are dependent on claim 1 and as such also meet the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty and inventive step.

Claims

1) A machine for dispensing fluid substances into containers, comprising a tank (7), feed means (49) for supplying fluid substances to the tank (7), and a plurality of filler valves (8) positioned beneath the tank (7) such as can be associated singly with the containers, the tank (7) comprising a plurality of different compartments (12, 13, 14, 15) isolated one from another and connecting each with at least one of the filler valves (8) and being rotatable about a respective axis (A) of rotation, the feed means (49) comprising a valve assembly (19) by which fluid substances are directed selectively to the different compartments of the tank (7); the machine being characterised in that the valve assembly (19) comprises a fixed portion (20) presenting a plurality of inlet ports (22) admitting fluid substances received from respective sources (23, 24, 25, 26), and a moving portion (21), rotatable as one with the tank (7) about the relative axis (A), presenting a plurality of outlet ports (28) from which the fluid substances are directed to the respective compartments of the tank (7).

2) A machine as in claim 1, wherein the tank (7) is of substantially circular appearance and comprises a plurality of radial baffles (16) by which the selfsame tank (7) is divided into a corresponding plurality of internal compartments (12, 13, 14, 15).

3) A machine as in claim 1, wherein the inlet ports (22) are positioned on the fixed portion (20) of the valve assembly (19) at different heights relative to the axis (A) of rotation, and the outlet ports (28) are connected to the rotating portion (21) occupying positions spaced apart angularly about the selfsame axis (A).

4) A machine as in claims 1 to 3, comprising a container labelling station (42) at which different labels are applied to the containers according to the particular fluid substance dispensed from the tank (7) into each one of the selfsame containers.

5) A machine as in claim 4, wherein the labelling station (42) comprises a plurality of labelling units (43, 44, 45, 46), corresponding in number at least to the number of the compartments (12, 13, 14, 15).

6) A machine as in claims 1 to 3, comprising a container closing station at which different closures are applied to the containers according to the particular fluid substance dispensed from the tank (7) into each one of the selfsame containers.